



Leech

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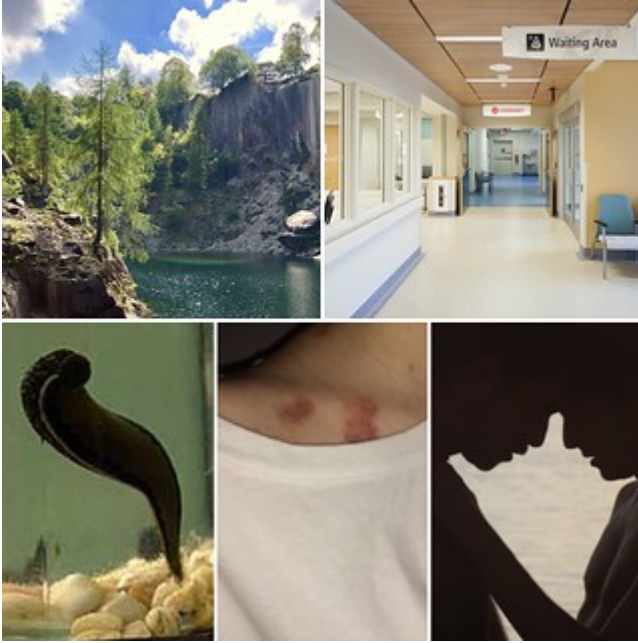
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Summary:

Eddie returns from a day at the quarry and goes to the doctor.

Leech



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"What are those?" Mrs. Kaspbrak asked suspiciously as she peered down at Eddie, eyes narrowing at her son.

Eddie knew that his mother had supersonic hearing. She always has and she always will. How else would she hear a candy bar unwrapping in Eddie's bedroom, or how he would whisper into the phone to Richie in the middle of the night. Today had really been a good day with the Losers club that he had to interrupt in order to come home. Eddie forgot about his mother until he was about to put the key into the lock.

Fuck, he thought to himself.

Through the living room window, cracked open just an inch, he could hear his mother enjoying her favorite game show. There was a live

studio audience and timer bells dinging and prizes awarded. And Eddie knew she was indulging in bags of pork rinds, which he hated with a passion – disgusting, flaky, greasy clumps.

Eddie took out his key and went for the lock, trying to be quiet. Mrs. Kaspbrak still called out to him before he even turned the doorknob.

"Is that you, Eddie? Come see me, baby."

Eddie sighed under his breath. He wanted to get upstairs before his mother got a good look at him. He was in dire need of a bath, as he reeked of his outdoor adventures and romantic hideaway, and wasn't that interested in forcing conversation with his mother at the moment. "Yes, Mom," he called through the door and continued to work the lock.

Inside, Eddie toed off his shoes and moved to stand in the archway to greet her. He could feel the cool air from the ceiling fan blowing toward him and now the scent of the quarry and grass was even stronger around him.

Mrs. Kaspbrak glanced at her son out of the corner of her eye, then looked back to her game show. She popped a pork rind into her mouth and licked her fingers. "You're home early."

"It's almost five. You said you wanted me home to go to bingo with you," Eddie reminded her.

"Where did you go today?" Mrs. Kaspbrak asked distractedly. "Did you have a nice time?"

'A nice time' wasn't exactly how Eddie would describe his afternoon, at least to his mother. In his mind, the time that he had was greater than any adult magazine he had ever flipped through, even though there was nothing below the waist. "We swam at the quarry. It was great," he replied in his most nonchalant voice.

Mrs. Kaspbrak frowned, shaking her head at her son's answer. "I have no idea why you would even consider going near that place, Eddie. It's filthy, there's bugs and germs and you could hurt yourself. Are you sure you wouldn't rather go to the public pool? They use

chemicals in the water there."

"No thanks, Mom," Eddie said in his nicest voice.

Anyway, the quarry was just a nice place for the Losers Club to go. It was much more private for the seven and they could do anything they wanted together. Eddie could do anything he wanted with Richie out there and none of the others cared.

Eddie paused, waiting for his mother to push further. When all that responded was loud live audience laughter, Eddie moved for the stairs. But as his foot rested on the bottom step, Mrs. Kaspbrak's voice made him slow his movement. She was on him in a flash, trapping him between her floral printed body and the railing going up.

"What are those?" Mrs. Kaspbrak asked suspiciously as she peered down at Eddie, eyes narrowing at her son.

Eddie felt himself freeze up, startled by his mother's body suddenly leering over him. "What is it?" he asked nervously. Was there a cut? Oh fuck, it was probably hidden in his hairline and he was bleeding profusely, it was everywhere and no one had said anything and now there was an infection –

Mrs. Kaspbrak squinted more as she leaned in closer. Eddie noticed her eyes weren't even on his head or face, but lower, just under his chin and around his neck. "Right there! And there's another one. There are bruises all over your neck, Eddie."

She touched his skin, letting her fingertips ghost over the sensitive skin of his pulse. There was a tiny flicker of pressure and Eddie knew exactly what his mother was referring to.

Barely half an hour ago, Richie and Eddie were resting together after swimming while their friends played in the water. They were hidden in the shade of the trees, Richie in only his underwear while Eddie had pulled his shorts back on. Eddie was lying back on a towel with Richie stretched on top of him, with his thin lipped yapper pressed up and down Eddie's cheek, his ears, his neck, his hand gentle over Eddie's chest. His chapped lips moved over the curve between in Eddie's neck and shoulder –

"Ow! Richie, that hurts!"

"Sorry, Eds, but I can't help it. You're so cute I could eat you up."

At the time, it had been one of the most sensual moments of their relationship. They usually didn't get too much time alone to do more than brief kisses, an occasional make out when they managed to be alone. Eddie knew exactly what his mother was looking at because this one time, they went too far and Richie left his mark. But Eddie couldn't tell his mother that one of his best friends do this, could he?

"What kind of skin disease is this?" Mrs. Kaspbrak stuck her finger past the collar of Eddie's shirt and pulled it out a bit. She rung her finger around once, then back and she looked absolutely terrified.

"There are bites too. Take off your shirt," Mrs. Kaspbrak straightened up. Eddie paused, and his mother snapped again. "Take off your shirt, Eddie!"

Eddie didn't want to do as told, but crossed his arms over his chest, grabbed the bottom of his tee, and pulled up. He couldn't see his mother for a couple of moments, but he could hear her gasp in shock. He knew the marks had been dark earlier, but had hoped they would lighten up some by the time he made it home. *Damn it, Richie*, he thought to himself.

"Mom, whatever it is, I'm sure it's not that bad," he tried to discourage her worry, the ring of his collar trapped between his nose and mouth.

But it didn't matter what he said, because as usual, Mrs. Kaspbrak began to moan and groan, sounding so concerned by the sight. Eddie was still wrestling his shirt off when he spoke to her again. "Mom! It's fine – "

"Oh, Eddie, you are never to go to the quarry again! As if you didn't see – can't believe you – hide this from your own mother! As if I wouldn't find out!" Mrs. Kaspbrak sputtered, turning to leave the room. "Put your shirt back on and go to the car!"

Eddie was wondering how bad this was going to be. He knew the

marks were there when he left the quarry and that they were dark, but he thought they would tone down some by the time he got back home. No one had said anything to him. But Eddie did as told and rearranged his shirt, putting it back on normally. He did pause for a moment to do like his mother and pulled the collar out. He glanced down inside and looked to his chest, and that's when he saw what had made his mother so nervous.

There were spots, bruises, bites, whatever dotting his chest. Many that went from one shoulder to the other, the lowest one just above his left nipple, sizing from quarters to golf balls, in purple hues to dark red. The bite marks were glowing in hot pink.

Eddie groaned at the sight and dropped his collar back. "Fuck you, Richie – "

Mrs. Kaspbrak reappeared from the kitchen, her greasy fingers carrying the car keys and her purse was tucked under one arm. "Eddie, get in the car. We're going to the hospital!"

"Mom, wait – "

Mrs. Kaspbrak grabbed his wrist and pulled him toward the door. Outside, she barely paused to lock the front door before dragging her son down the steps and to the car.

"Why are we going to the hospital? It's not that big of a deal, Mom, really – " Eddie tried to distract his mother, trying to convince her that they didn't need to go to the hospital yet again this month. They had been doing so well...

Mrs. Kaspbrak shoved Eddie into the car and just before closing the door, she finally replied, her expression fearful. "Eddie, your neck is covered in leech bites! What else am I supposed to do? Put an ice pack on it?"

She slammed the door and hurried around to the driver's side, ignoring the protests of her son as they drove down the street.

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It was after ten o'clock that night when the Tozier's phone began to

ring. Richie was almost asleep on the sofa, the television on before him, but he jerked awake at the shrill sound. His parents were out for the evening, so the phone wouldn't bother them.

Adjusting his glasses, Richie shuffled across the room to the phone on the table stand. He brushed his hair from his face and answered the call. "Hello?"

The voice on the other end was spoken through gritted teeth. "I'm going to kill you."

Richie paused. This was a threat made usually from Stan, when provoked, or Henry Bowers. And it didn't sound like the town bully or the Uris boy. "Eddie?" Richie asked.

There was a sharp inhale on the other end as Eddie tried to relax. "Guess where I've been tonight," he said in a short tone.

Richie's eyebrows lifted in intrigue. "Well, Eds, I thought you were going home to finish what I started because you left in such a hurry. If you just now finished, that was what, four hours? I'm impressed you lasted that long."

"I've been at the hospital all evening."

Oh. Nothing as exciting as Richie had thought. This wasn't one of those phone calls, the ones Richie had read about in dirty magazines. But they hadn't been dating too long for anything like that anyway. "What did Mrs. K drag you in for this time?" he asked.

"For the leech bites all over my neck and chest. The ones I had when I came home from the quarry," Eddie explained, trying to relax his jaw as to not grit his teeth anymore. "That was what my mother told the doctor, that I had been in the quarry all day and had been viciously attacked by blood sucking leeches that gave me this horrible skin disease."

For some reason, Eddie thought he might receive an apology from Richie. For marking up his body and making him look like some nasty pervert in front of his mother and the family doctor. Maybe Richie would offer to buy something to make Eddie feel better,

maybe say he would speak to Mrs. Kaspbrak about what had happened. Something, anything.

There was a wheezing sound on the other end of the line, then a whistling as laughter was squeezed through Richie's throat.

Eddie couldn't believe it. "*Are you fucking laughing at me?*" he nearly shrieked.

"Oh *fuck*, Eddie, that's terrible!" Richie cackled. "Your Mom thought you got a skin disease from leeches?!"

"I tried to tell her it wasn't that bad. But then she decided it was leeches. I've been at the hospital for four and a half hours getting my blood drawn and my temperature taken," Eddie groaned, looking at the bandages in the fold of his elbow.

He couldn't see that Richie was bent over laughing, one hand in the phone table as he tried to control himself. But for Richie, the image of his sweetheart in a paper gown on a hospital bed, all because of a few love bites, was really funny to him. Mrs. Kaspbrak knew how to go above and beyond with the hospital.

"What did she say when she found out it wasn't leeches?" Richie finally asked.

Eddie groaned again. "I think the doctor was more embarrassed to tell her than I was to be there. And she didn't believe him!"

"She didn't?" Richie snorted. "I guess she never found the ones I left on her then!"

"That's disgusting, Richie. The doctor kept telling her it was love bites and she would deny that I would have anything like that. But then he told her I needed to just put ice on it, and she started crying. I think she got it then," he paused. "I had to tell her it came from you."

Richie did feel bad now. He didn't want Eddie getting in trouble for what they had done, considering they hadn't announced their relationship to their parents yet. "Do you want me to bring some ice?" he stuck his hand into his pocket in search of change, to see if he could afford said ice.

Mrs. Kaspbrak called to her son then, using a weepy, emotional voice. "Eddie, come down, please. I have your ice ready."

Eddie shook his head at the guilt attempt. The car ride had been awkward and nearly silent, with the exception of his mother's sniffles. They didn't look at each other the whole ride back. "No, it's too late. She's calling for me now anyway. I should go downstairs and let her freeze you off of me."

"How about you just return the favor and give me a skin disease?" Richie teased. "I'll let you be the doctor and you can take my temperature, if you know what I mean."

"I *know* my mom is not too thrilled with you right now, after what you did. Maybe if I promise that you'll be on your best behavior, then maybe she'll let me see you in two weeks instead of a month."

Richie laughed. "I'll have to tickle my pickle until I see you again."

Eddie frowned. At least it Richie used one of his cleaner terms for masturbating. "I'm still going to kill you...even if I love you," he reminded Richie, his voice softening with affection.

After all, even if Richie was a horny idiot, he was Eddie's horny idiot.

"Good," Richie smirked, pausing to soak in his sweetheart's words. "I love you too, Eddie Spaghetti."

Eddie couldn't be mad when Richie said it with such feeling. He smirked as his cheeks flushed, and they hung up their phones.

Downstairs, Mrs. Kaspbrak placed Eddie in a chair in the kitchen without a shirt. She draped bags of frozen vegetables on Eddie's shoulders and chest and he held ice cold spoons to his neck. He sat there until after midnight, while his mother sniffled and whimpered in her chair in the living room.

"Whatever will I tell the neighbors? How is this happening? Oh, I can't believe what that Tozier boy did this you!" she moaned over the late night movie playing.

Oh yes, Eddie was going to kill Richie.

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Author's Note:

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